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FOR WHA/CAN AND INR/B

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: PGOV PINR PREL CA  
SUBJECT: NOVA SCOTIA'S NEW LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

¶1. (U) Prime Minister Harper has named Mayann Francis to be the next Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, replacing Myra Freeman. Francis has been since 1999 CEO of the province's Human Rights Commission, where she has developed a reputation as an effective manager and advocate for human rights. She is a native of Sydney, Nova Scotia, and holds a master's degree in business administration from New York University. She will be the first African-Nova Scotian to hold the largely ceremonial post as the Queen's representative in the province.

¶2. (SBU) Francis is well-known to the Consulate. She still maintains close ties to the U.S., generally traveling to New York to spend Thanksgiving with relatives. We have found her to be very interested in bilateral exchanges; she has organized meetings on several occasions for our visiting Black History Month speakers, gathering professionals from Halifax with shared interests for informal conversations on a wide range of topics including race relations in both countries. Following the President's visit to Halifax in December 2004 she wrote a positive newspaper column about her experience at his speech. Earlier this spring Francis collaborated with Valerie Payne, President of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, to invite Secretary Rice to visit Halifax to speak to a Chamber audience.

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¶3. (SBU) COMMENT: Myra Freeman's more than six years as a very active and visible Lt-Governor will be a hard act to follow, but if anyone can do it, Mayann Francis can. Freeman was tireless in promoting the province's academic and arts sectors and opening up Government House to thousands of people from all walks of life. Mayann Francis has impressed us with her intelligence, political savvy and energy, and we expect her to make full use of her new office to promote positive civic values such as academic excellence. END COMMENT.

¶4. (U) Full biographic information will follow septel.

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